



# Extension Connection

## Extension Notes

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### Out with the Old...

The fourth and final season of the year, Autumn, also affectionately known as Fall, is a time for among other things, reflecting on a year that is gradually growing older, and preparing the way for inevitable changes which will usher in the new year ahead. And while change is mostly about what's new, it of necessity also involves looking at past factors which have contributed to the present, as well as reviewing current factors with a plan to influencing future outcomes.

The science behind changing leaf colors is the focus of our article on Fall foliage (p.2), and a changing approach for weed management to influence a potentially weed-free future, is the focus of our article on controlling sandspurs (p.3). Sometimes unintentional changes are the result of well-meaning intentions, as is the case with some of the aquatic invasive plants featured in our article on pond management (p.5). Intentional changes are the focus of our article on living well – mentally, emotionally, physically, and financially (p.8). As the year wraps up, there's no better time to reflect on the year thus far and create a plan for making intentional changes for the future. Speaking of the future, our 4-H article (p.10) features recent youth graduates, highlighting how the program has helped them to hone their skills as they assimilate into the workforce of the future. With an eye on ensuring that future generations also inherit Earth's resources which we are currently privileged to enjoy, our article on practicing sustainability during the holiday season (p. 11) has some helpful tips. Other tips on how to thoroughly embrace the year's fourth quarter are offered in the Gardening Calendar article (p.19). Be sure to check out our classes and events (details on pp.14-15): Florida-Friendly Landscaping™, and Master Gardener Library Series, Living Well FCS seminars, and our volunteer fundraising events – *Master Gardener Plant Sale* on Oct. 18, and *4-H Stampede Rodeo* on Nov. 21.

And as we bring the year to a close, when we reflect with a spirit of Thanksgiving on what we are thankful for, as always, we extend our heartfelt appreciation for your continued support of the UF/IFAS Extension mission in Citrus County.

### For more information contact

UF/IFAS Extension Citrus County  
352-527-5700 ■ FAX (352) 527-5748

[citrus@ifas.ufl.edu](mailto:citrus@ifas.ufl.edu)

<https://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/citrus/>

[SolutionsForYourLife.com](http://SolutionsForYourLife.com)

We're here to help you find "solutions for your life."  
Your Citrus County Extension Team!



## Falling for Fall Colors

There is a reason why Fall foliage leaf-peeping tours are 'a thing'; maybe not so much of a thing in areas where Endless Summers are a thing, like anywhere categorized as having tropical or subtropical climate, (including a large part of Florida), but even if one has to travel a few hundred miles to see Fall foliage up close and personal, Fall colors are definitely a thing to fall for.

As an unapologetic plant enthusiast, whilst I think Fall foliage colors are awesome, I think the coolest part of the phenomenon is all the plant science happening behind the scenes, which creates the wondrous color show! And yes, I know that not everyone is an unapologetic plant enthusiast, (that's okay), so for the purpose of this article I'll try to give the 'short-and-sweet' version of the plant science behind Fall colors.

Anyone even vaguely familiar with what a plant is, is aware that it has leaves which are typically green in color, and this is due to the green pigment chlorophyll. Chlorophyll plays an important role for plants as the molecule responsible for photosynthesis, which empowers plants to make their own food. The food made by plants is in turn, used by humans and other animals for sustenance.

What may not be so obvious to the casual observer, is that while actively growing, most green leaves also have other pigments (e.g. anthocyanins), which are masked by the green pigment chlorophyll. Once leaves transition out of the actively growing stage, they engage in a process designed to recycle the very valuable green pigment chlorophyll, to the younger sections of plant growth. When a leaf's chlorophyll is no longer present, the previously masked leaf pigments of orange, yellow, and purple, emerge - just like magic! Thus, heralding the start of Autumn, the season of everything-pumpkin-spice, and a no-excuses trip to the mountains of Tennessee, North Carolina, New Hampshire, New York, or Vermont, to see spectacular displays of Fall's colors, designed by nature!



Photo: Univ. Missouri

**Marguerite Beckford, EdD**  
Citrus County Extension  
Director & Horticulture Agent



# Florida-Friendly Landscaping

## Sandspurs!! Don't bank on it

Not all native plants are friendly in Florida. Sandspur is an annual native grass adaptable to sandy, well-drained, dry, exposed conditions. During mild winters this annual may act as a perennial surviving through to Spring. *Cenchrus echinatus* has a shallow, fibrous root system making it simple to dig up. This being the quickest and least impactful method of control once you are able to identify this invader.

Sandspur is a thin-bladed grass, which grows low to the ground. The best time to identify this annual's location is when it produces its wicked spur. This weed, like most weeds, looks for opportunity. Hot, dry, sandy, well-drained soil, where other things won't grow, is the first place to look. Clusters of spiky seed pods containing up to three seeds each, will emerge during the summer, making it easy to spot while scouting.

Strategies will be necessary for management of this nuisance. Like many weeds, sandspur is a big seed producer. A big painful seed producer! Managing and eliminating the production of seeds is beneficial. If you are aware of the infestation, you might keep an eye out for flower production and remove the flower to reduce or eliminate seed production.

If the spur is produced and apparent, a cloth, burlap or old carpet can be drawn through the area to collect seed reducing the seed bank for the next generation of 'spurs'. When the spur stalks are 3 to 6 inches, they can be collected when mowing using a bagger on your mower, but often, they hang low to the ground, making this practice more difficult.

Options for selective post-emergent weed killers for grassy weeds in Florida residential lawns, are limited. The infestation can be controlled utilizing non-selective herbicide, but these products will kill all plants that they contact, making them less appealing.

Applying pre-emergent herbicide is a practical method of controlling sandspur. Patience and proper scheduling will be necessary. Pre-M herbicides prevent the next generation of seed germination by creating a barrier disabling root penetration into the soil. This barrier when correctly applied will last for 3 to 5 months. Timing is essential so the barrier is intact during the germination window of the weed seed. A mid- to late February application will create a 4-month barrier through June.



**Steven Davis, MA**  
Citrus County Extension  
FFL Program Coordinator



The target soil temperature for sandspur germination is 52 degrees Fahrenheit, typically around mid-March in central Florida. For heavy infestations of sandspur, depending on the product used, residual applications every 6 to 8 weeks through August may be recommended, to provide effective control throughout Summer. Be sure to read the product label completely, correctly apply the product, and water the product in to create an effective pre-emergent barrier. Caveat: pre-emergent herbicides may stain hardscapes, so use caution before, during, and after applying. Remove shoes prior to entering the house.

Competition from healthy lawn grass will also minimize seed germination of many potential weeds. Mow lawns at the tallest height possible making weed seed germination less likely. Most weed seeds germinate in Spring and Fall. Targeting your Pre-M barrier application to the seasonal germination window will reduce germination of the seed bank, reducing the next crop of this problematic weed. Once the seeds appear, hand pulling (preferably with gloves) is the quickest way to eliminate it from your garden space.



*Photo: Creative Commons*



*Photo: Friends of Shell Key Preserve*



*Photo: Creative Commons*





**Alyssa Schortinghouse, PhD**  
Citrus County Extension  
Agriculture/Natural Resources  
Agent

## Pond Management

### Seasonal Shifts and Pond Health

As Fall brings a welcome reprieve from Florida's intense summer heat, it's important to remember that ponds, both natural and man-made, remain vulnerable to a variety of seasonal challenges. Ponds are typically defined as shallow bodies of still water, formed either naturally or through excavation, and their classification often depends on their intended function.

Common types include construction ponds, functional or retention ponds, and permanent water sources. Regardless of their primary purpose, ponds provide a wide range of environmental and practical benefits, including biodiversity support, flood mitigation, water storage, and even recreational or aesthetic value.

### Key Components of a Healthy Pond Ecosystem

A thriving pond ecosystem depends on the interaction of multiple living and non-living elements. Together, these components regulate water quality, support biodiversity, and contribute to the overall health and function of the system. Below is a closer look at the key building blocks of a balanced pond environment.

**Water:** Water quality is central to all pond life. Several physical and chemical factors must be carefully monitored:

- **pH:** Ideal pH range is typically between 6.0 to 9.0, supporting a wide range of aquatic species.
- **Temperature:** Influences metabolism of fish and microbes, dissolved oxygen levels, and plant growth.
- **Dissolved Oxygen (DO):** Critical for fish, beneficial bacteria, and aerobic decomposition. Low oxygen can result in fish kills and poor water clarity.



### Plants: Nature's Filtration System

Aquatic vegetation plays a vital role in sustaining water quality, preventing erosion, and supporting wildlife.

- **Submerged Plants** (e.g., hornwort, eelgrass): Grow entirely beneath the surface, producing oxygen and providing habitat for fish and invertebrates.

- **Floating Plants** (e.g., duckweed, water lilies): offer surface coverage to reduce sunlight penetration, which helps limit algal growth and maintain cooler water temperatures.
- **Emergent Plants** (e.g., pickerelweed, bulrush): Rooted in shallow areas with stems above the water, these plants reduce shoreline erosion and help filter pollutants from runoff.

## Animals: Key Players in the Pond Ecosystem

Pond animals contribute to ecological balance through nutrient cycling, population control, and habitat interaction.

- **Fish** (e.g., bluegill, bass, koi): Help control insect population and maintain trophic balance.
- **Amphibians** (e.g., frogs, toads): Act as indicators of water quality and consume pests.
- **Livestock** (e.g., cattle with pond access): Should be managed to prevent overgrazing and shoreline damage.



## Microorganisms: The Hidden Workforce

Microbes are often unseen, but their role is essential in maintaining a clean and healthy pond.

- **Bacteria**: Breakdown organic material, aiding in nutrient cycling and preventing sludge buildup.
- **Algae**: While some algae are natural and beneficial, excess growth can indicate an imbalance.
- **Fungi & Protozoa**: Contribute to decomposition and nutrient recycling within the pond's food web.

**A healthy pond is more than just water; it's a dynamic ecosystem.** Understanding the roles each component plays allows pond owners and managers to better maintain ecological balance, water clarity, and long-term sustainability. As we transition into the cooler months, proactive pond management becomes essential to maintaining these benefits and preventing common Fall and Winter issues.

## Common Pond Problems

**Algae Overgrowth:** Excessive algae growth, often appearing as thick green scum or floating mats, typically results from high nutrient levels and stagnant water.

- **Impacts:** Algae blooms can block sunlight from reaching submerged plants, reduce oxygen levels, harm fish population, and create unpleasant odors.

**Invasive Species:** Non-native aquatic plants, such as hydrilla or water hyacinth, can rapidly spread and disrupt the pond ecosystem.

- **Impacts:** These species often outcompete native vegetation, degrade habitat quality, and reduce biodiversity.



## Effective Pond Management Tips

### Aeration and Water Circulation

Proper aeration improves oxygen levels, enhances water clarity, and helps decompose organic matter that can fuel algae growth. Floating fountains, diffused air systems, or surface agitators are all effective tools.

### Algae Control

- Manual: Regularly skim algae and remove organic debris.
- Biological: Introduce algae-eating fish such as tilapia or grass carp (where permitted).
- Chemical: Use algaecides responsibly and according to label instructions to avoid harming aquatic life.

### Encourage Beneficial Plants

Native aquatic plants help shade the water, outcompete algae for nutrients, and support wildlife. The strategic introduction of fish species that contribute to ecological balance can help manage submerged vegetation, control insect larvae and smaller fish population. However, it is critical not to overstock the pond.

**Proactive management and routine monitoring are key to keeping your pond healthy year-round.** Whether your pond is for function, habitat, or enjoyment, Fall and Winter are critical times to ensure long-term water quality and ecosystem health.





## Fall Into Wellness: Practical Tips for a Healthy & Happy Season

While Florida might not bring the crisp air and changing leaves found in other parts of the country, Fall still offers a welcome shift in pace and energy. As the summer heat begins to ease and our routines settle into a new rhythm, it's the perfect time to pause and focus on your well-being: mentally, physically, financially, and emotionally. Whether you're enjoying seasonal meals, planning for the holidays, or taking advantage of cooler mornings and evenings, there are countless ways to nurture a healthy and balanced lifestyle this Autumn.

**Stephanie McMinds, BA**  
Citrus County Extension  
Family & Consumer Sciences  
Agent

Here are some practical and family-friendly tips to help you "fall into wellness" this season:

### 1. Embrace the Flavors of Fall

Fall is a time of abundance when it comes to fruits and vegetables. Avocados, mangoes, watermelon, oranges, peanuts, and mushrooms, are just a few of the delicious and nutritious foods available locally this time of year. These seasonal superfoods are packed with fiber, vitamins A and C, and antioxidants that help boost your immune system - especially important as cold and flu season arrives.

Try this: Make a roasted vegetable medley with carrots, beets, and sweet potatoes, or prepare a hearty soup with butternut squash and lentils. Get your kids involved by having them help wash veggies or stir ingredients!

Bonus: Buying seasonal produce at farmers' markets not only supports local growers but can also help you save money.

### 2. Refresh Your Financial Focus

With the holiday season fast approaching, now is the time to evaluate your household budget and set financial intentions. The cost of gifts, travel, food, and decorations, can quickly add up if you're not careful. By planning ahead, you can avoid overspending and reduce financial stress during what should be a joyful time.

#### Budgeting tips:

- Create a gift-giving list and assign a spending limit for each person.





- Start a savings plan now by setting aside a small amount each week.
- Look for holiday sales and make use of discount codes.
- Consider homemade gifts such as jams, cookie mixes in jars, or framed family photos.



### 3. Get Your Home Fall-Ready

Fall is an ideal time to complete a few simple maintenance tasks around the house to prepare for the cooler months ahead. These steps can improve your home's energy efficiency and keep your family safe and warm.

#### Home maintenance checklist:

- Check and replace batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.
- Clean gutters to prevent blockages from falling leaves.
- Inspect and seal any drafts around windows and doors.

**Energy-saving tip:** Adjust your thermostat and switch to a programmable one to better manage energy costs.

### 4. Focus on Mental Wellness and Connection

As daylight hours decrease and schedules become busier, it's important to prioritize mental health and connection. The change in season can affect mood and energy levels. Finding time for outdoor activity, creative hobbies, and meaningful social interaction can make a big difference.

#### Ideas for Fall Mental wellness:

- Start a gratitude journal or share what you're thankful for at family dinners.
- Plan a nature walk, farm visit, or backyard bonfire with loved ones.
- Engage in mindful practices like meditation, yoga, or deep breathing exercises.
- Set boundaries and avoid overcommitting during the holiday season.



### 5. Celebrate Fall Safely

From harvest festivals to Thanksgiving dinners, Fall is full of opportunities to celebrate with others. But it's also a season when food safety and hygiene are especially important, particularly when cooking large meals or gathering in close settings.

#### Safety reminders:

- Always wash hands before preparing or eating food.
- Cook meat to the correct internal temperature.
- Don't leave perishable foods out for more than one hour.
- If you're sick, stay home and rest - it's okay to reschedule!

Consider offering lighter options at meals and encouraging family members to take short walks after dinner to support digestion and wellness.

**In Conclusion:** Fall is more than just a time of change in nature - it can be a time of personal change and renewal. By taking small steps to care for your body, mind, home, and finances, you'll be better prepared to enjoy everything the season has to offer. Whether you're sipping apple cider with loved ones, tackling a DIY home project, or planning a gratitude-filled holiday, remember to give yourself grace, and enjoy the beauty of the season.

# 4-H Volunteers and Youth



**Marnie Ward, PhD**  
Citrus County Extension  
4-H Agent

## 4-H and Workforce Partners

Nationally, 4-H is the only youth development program formally connected to research-based educational institutions. Why is that? We need to look back to 1862 and the passage of the Morrill Act. Through this legislation, each state received a grant of land for the creation of a “land-grant” college/university that would teach agricultural and mechanical arts. According to their missions, land-grant Universities provide practical education and advanced knowledge to improve the lives of citizens. Florida has two land-grant institutions, Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) and the University of Florida (UF). Here in Citrus County, our connection to UF and FAMU, paves the way for youth to access innovative research programs and real-world experiences. Through targeted programs like 4-H University, 4-H Legislature, 4-H iLead, and more, the next generation of leaders is learning and practicing skills for the future.

But 4-H does not do it alone; we collaborate with partners that share our commitment to reaching youth with engaging, age-appropriate experiences, propelling youth towards a head start on important career skills: time management, organization and planning, problem solving, innovation, and creativity.

### Industry Partners

- Tractor Supply – sponsorships for youth leadership programs.
- Corteva Agriscience – project supplies and experts in the field.



### Certification:

- Agriculture Education Services & Technology, Inc. (AEST) - provides on-demand agriculture industry certifications.

### Career Readiness:

- Local Producers/Farmers – offer internships/work experience to students.

### Fair Associations

- Local – provide hands-on experiences in care of livestock and small animals.
- State – leadership opportunities for youth of all ages.

Several Citrus County 4-H youth members have benefitted from these partnerships. Earlier this year, Evan Leturno graduated from Lecanto High School. An alum of Lecanto Levi's 4-H, he has completed an internship with Circle T Sod, a local sod company. Using the skills that he learned through 4-H and internships, he is now studying for a future career in agriculture.





## Celebrating Seasons of Sustainability

Environmental stewardship and sustainability are building blocks of 4-H locally and nationally. In the pledge “My health to better living”, 4-H commits to the importance and responsibility of sustainable choices. See the articles ‘Buy Less, Choose Well’, and ‘Make it Last’ in the April issue of Extension Connection. As we approach the holidays and celebrations of the “brrr” months (October, November, and December), there are many opportunities for smart resource use.

### October – Halloween

This month traditionally kicks off the Fall season with lower humidity and cooler temperatures. Fall celebrations involve planning, and that usually means costumes, decorations, and a lot of single-use toys and treats. Avoid buying items made of plastic or synthetic materials. Break out of the mold and celebrate nature’s bounty with pumpkins, squash, homemade scarecrows, and the unexpected things that “go bump in the night” made by hand.



Use scraps of fabric or old t-shirts to make “friendly ghost” decorations. Add eyes and mouth with a marker. For a spookier look, soak fabric pieces in left-over coffee or tea.



Use whole cloves to “write” messages on seasonal harvests and display in your home and yard.



Rather than buying costumes, be creative and borrow items to create your own. With the pledge “My head to clearer thinking”, 4-H members seek creative solutions and lead by example.

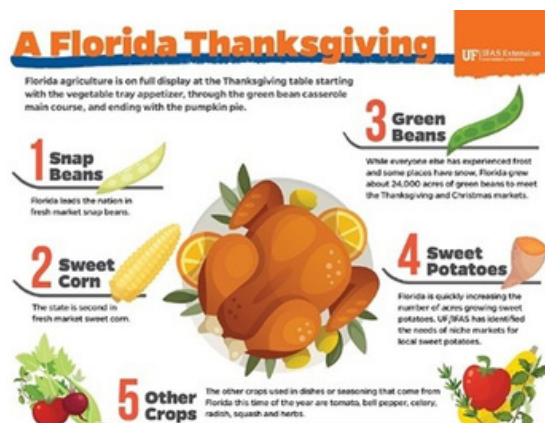


**Marnie Ward, PhD**  
Citrus County Extension  
4-H Agent

## **November – Thanksgiving**

Food is often the centerpiece of a Thanksgiving celebration. In my family it's a whole roasted turkey and all the trimmings, but it is also a time dedicated to valuing family, friends, and community.

Buying local, supports farmers in the community and ensures the freshest ingredients. Florida produces many Thanksgiving staples – potatoes, green beans, and sweet corn.



Celebrate with family and friends. This holiday is founded on a spirit of generosity and gratitude, where the simplest traditions have the most meaning.

Hand-made decorations share a commitment to tradition and create keepsakes for generations to share. Through the 4-H pledge of "My heart to greater loyalty" youth and adults commit to improving their communities and care for others.



## **December – Christmas and New Year's**

In Citrus County 4-H, December is overflowing with commitments to the last "H", "My hands to larger service." This promise by members, is to serve their communities and with that service, lift up those in need. Here, youth continue the commitment to celebrating nature's bounty and reduce the use of plastic and synthetic materials. Packaging and wrapping are two challenges during the December holidays. Below are some ideas to reduce these challenges:





Give gifts that don't require wrapping. A personalized wreath can be hung on a door or a wall and is ideal for encouraging creativity in our youngest 4-H members. Made from natural materials they are easily recycled after the holidays.



Continue the theme of using nature throughout the celebration of the seasons, by using Cedar tree "cookies" to create unique and personalized ornaments to share with family and friends.



Hand-made ornaments reduce the use of plastics. Focus on forest products and natural fibers (native grasses). Consider using American Holly (*Ilex opaca*), Southern Red Cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*), and Magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*). Burlap is a nice accent, and it has many uses after the holidays are over.



Take that creativity outside by building yard decorations from recycled pallets. These can be donated to retirement facilities, community associations, or given out to recognize supporters in the community.



# Gardening Seminar Schedule



## Hosted Online and/or In-Person

Register here for these free seminars: <https://ccufflprogram.eventbrite.com>



“Fruit trees in  
Central Florida”

Tuesday October 7  
2:00 - 4:00 pm

“Right plant Right  
place”

Tuesday October 21  
2:00 - 4:00 pm

“Pollinator & Butterfly  
gardens”

Tuesday November 4  
2:00 - 4:00 pm

“Planning a Florida  
landscape”

Tuesday November 18  
2:00 - 4:00 pm

“Planning a Florida  
Landscape”

Tuesday December 2  
2:00 - 4:00 pm

“Invasive & nuisance  
plants”

Tuesday December 16  
2:00 - 4:00 pm

**Irrigation & Turf Management 101 on Thursday, October 2, 2025, 12:00 - 3:00 p.m.**

Water Resources - Rain Barrel Workshop

Thursday, Nov 13, 2025, from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

UF/IFAS Extension Citrus County

3650 W Sovereign Path, Ste 1, Lecanto, FL 34461

Get tickets at the webpage:

<http://ccufflprogram.eventbrite.com>

Contact: [steven.davis@citrusbocc.com](mailto:steven.davis@citrusbocc.com)



<https://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/citrus/>



(352) 527-5700

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[citrus@ifas.ufl.edu](mailto:citrus@ifas.ufl.edu)



# Classes/Events/Seminars

## OCTOBER, NOVEMBER, DECEMBER



### Monthly Extension Master Gardener Seminars

Seminars offer an opportunity to explore timely garden topics and are offered at each Citrus County Library. No registration required for in person seminars.

All programs start at **1:00 p.m.**, are approximately 1 hour, and are free.

ZOOM seminar: pre-registration info available on our Facebook page.

- October: Bad Bugs
- November: Invasives
- December: See you in 2026!

- |                   |  |               |
|-------------------|--|---------------|
| • 1st Monday      | Lakes Regional Library                                 | Inverness     |
| • 2nd Wednesday   | Central Ridge Library                                  | Beverly Hills |
| • 3rd Monday ZOOM | —Pre-registration info available on our Facebook page! |               |
| • 3rd Wednesday   | Floral City Library                                    | Floral City   |
| • 4th Monday      | Coastal Regional                                       | Crystal River |
| • 4th Thursday    | Homosassa Library                                      | Homosassa     |

Bring plant problems and questions for expert advice to the Plant Clinic at the Extension office.

Trained Master Gardeners are available most weekdays, between 8:30 a.m. & 4:30 p.m.

Schedules can vary, so please call ahead (352-527-5700).

Additionally, Plant Clinic questions and pictures can be emailed to:

IF-SVC-citrusmg@ad.ufl.edu



For 28 years, the Citrus Stampede Rodeo has been produced by the Citrus County 4-H Foundation

The Rodeo welcomes over 4,000 attendees during the 2-night event



In 1999, the arena that hosts the Rodeo was named for Eloise Van Ness, a longtime Citrus County 4-H Leader



All funds raised by the Rodeo go towards Citrus County 4-H clubs and youth



4-H is part of UF/IFAS Extension providing educational opportunities for local adults and youth



4-H connects with over 4,000 youth in Citrus County, both in and outside of schools



Citrus County 4-H has 17 Clubs with over 60 volunteers



Since 1999, the Citrus County Foundation has raised over \$320,000 in scholarships and support for Citrus County Youth



Citrus Stampede Rodeo Supports 4-H



&

4-H Youth Programs Supported by the Rodeo



Citrus Stampede Rodeo November 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>. Tickets on Sale Now!



**UF** | **IFAS Extension**  
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA



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# 9th ANNUAL PLANT SALE

**Saturday October 18, 2025**  
**8:30 am - 12:30 pm**

- Great Variety & Prices
- Many Native Plants
- Trees/Shrubs
- Perennials

Bring a wagon!



**“Ask A Master Gardener” Booth**

## **Citrus County Extension**

3650 W Sovereign Path, Lecanto

**352-527-5700**

**Service animals only please!**

**Cash or Checks Only**



Proceeds from the Plant Sale support Extension events and outreach programs.

# UPCOMING PROGRAMS

## CITRUS COUNTY FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES

**October 2<sup>nd</sup> - Culinary Series: Island Cuisine at Canning Center (12:00 PM)**

Create a globally inspired meal from scratch to enjoy. Cost is \$25.00. All supplies included.

**October 6<sup>th</sup> - Cooking Under Pressure at Canning Center (12:00 PM)**

Learn how to properly use an electric pressure cooker and air fryer to prepare a meal to enjoy at this cooking program. Cost is \$20.00. All supplies included.

**October 10<sup>th</sup> - Water Bath Canning Basics at Coastal Region Library (2:00 PM)**

Free program outlining the water bath canning process & safety tips.

**October 15<sup>th</sup> - Cooking for One or Two at Central Ridge Library (10:30 AM)**

Free program learning to prepare and shop for a meal for 1 or 2 along with cooking demo.

**October 28<sup>th</sup> - Basic Home Maintenance at Extension Office (2:00 PM)**

Learn foundational home maintenance skills to save time and money on simple home repairs and general upkeep. Cost is \$15.00. Drinks and snacks are provided.

**November 5<sup>th</sup> - Mocktails at Homosassa Library (1:00 PM)**

Free session demoing the mixology behind delicious alcohol-free beverages with samples.

**November 21<sup>st</sup> - Growing & Cooking with Herbs at Lakes Region Library (10:30 AM)**

Free session presenting the health & flavor benefits of incorporating herbs into your diet.

**November 21<sup>st</sup> - Adult Culinary Series: Tailgating at Canning Center (5:30 PM)**

Get ready to elevate your game day experience!!! Join us to create mouth-watering recipes over charcoal and learn important grilling safety tips. Cost is \$30. All supplies included.

**December 15<sup>th</sup> - Fall Prevention at Floral City Library (10:30 AM)**

*To register for any of our available programs,  
scan the QR code or call us at (352) 527 - 5700.*



# Fall Gardening Calendar



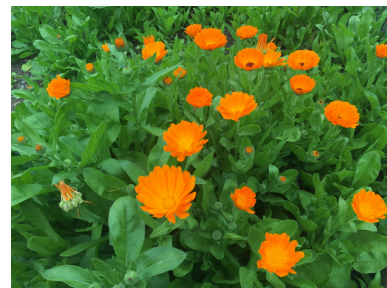
## Fall Gardening Calendar

### What to Plant

As the temperatures start to cool, annuals and other bedding plants can be added to the garden for color. Petunia, snapdragon, viola, chrysanthemum and many others can be used to brighten the Fall landscape.

There are also a number of culinary herbs that prefer the cooler months including basil, dill, cilantro, and thyme. Most herbs prefer very well-drained soil. Transplants of cool season vegetables and quicker growing veggies from seed can also be planted in Fall. Leafy greens, bulb onions, and sugar

snap peas, among others, are good additions to the Fall garden. For a complete list, visit this link: [Vegetable Gardening in Florida](#)



Early blooming camellia are also a great candidate for gardens during cooler months; Sasanqua cultivars bloom mid-Fall through early Winter, and Japonica cultivars bloom from early Winter through Spring.

### What to Do

The onset of Winter typically occurs from late December to mid-January. Be prepared with blankets, frost cloths, cardboard boxes, etc. to provide sensitive plants with cold protection. For citrus, the most frost-tolerant varieties are Meyer Lemon, Kumquat, Satsuma and Honeybell oranges.

### What to Watch For

Monitor for scale and other insect problems regularly. Horticultural oil sprays are low toxicity, and can control scale insects with minimal impact on non-target organisms. Watch for signs of lawn diseases, usually fungal pathogens that can cause gradually expanding patches of brown.

Lawns which experienced Fall fungus in a previous year should be monitored for early signs of recurrence to get a jump start on fungicide applications.

It is also recommended to alternate irrigation weeks in Winter as lawns enter dormancy. This will help to avoid frostbite 'tiger-stripe' patches if lawns experience freezing temperatures. A good reminder is to reset the irrigation system to MANUAL before prepping Thanksgiving dinner, so that irrigation is done only every other week during the dormant period - through February.

